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A
LETTER
FROM A
M I N I S T E R
Of the
Church of England
To M^r PETER DOWLEY,
A Dissenting Teacher
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN
Or else
INDEPENDENT
PERSWASION.

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ARTH. CHARLETT.

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EXTRAORDINARY

The people of the land of Egypt were hardening their hearts against Moses and Aaron, so that they would not let the Israelites go.

LETTER
 From a **M I N I S T E R**
 Of the
Church of England
 To
 Mr. **PETER DOWLEY,**
 A Dissenting Teacher of the *Presbyterian*
 or else *Independent Perswasion.*

SIR,

YOU know that a Minister of God's Word is frequently compared in the Holy Scriptures to a *Pastor* or *Shepherd*. And agreeable to this Comparison, as it is the Care and Concern of every *Good Common Shepherd* not only to *Feed* His Flock, but also to *Seek* and *Bring back* Such of his Sheep as happen to go astray, and withall to *Keep off* and *Hinder* any *Beast* of *Prey* from *Hurting* and *Devouring* Any of his Sheep; so in like manner it is the Care and Concern of every *Good Spiritual Shepherd*, not only to *Feed* his People with wholesome Instructions, but also to *Seek* and *Bring back* into the

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way of Truth such among them as are so unhappy as to have Erred from it, and withall to Keep off and Hinder any False Teacher from seducing or misleading Any of his People, and thereby endamaging their Spiritual Welfare: on account of which Fatal Damage, such False Teachers are (you know) compared in Scripture to no other than *Grievous and Ravenous Wolves*, *Actis 20. 29. Mat. 7. 15.*

This being the Indispensible Duty of every Faithfull Pastor and Minister, 'tis (by the Grace of God) my sincere desire and earnest endeavour to discharge this Duty to the utmost of my Power, in reference to each of its three several Branches above-mentioned.

As to the First Branch, 'tis my care and endeavour (as by other means and at other times, so more especially) in my Weekly Sermons to Instruct my Congregation, after the most plain and Edifying manner, in All that is required of a Christian to Believe and Practice; and after the Example of St. Paul (*Actis 20. 20.*) to keep back Nothing that may be Profitable unto them. To this end, it being (by reason of many Pernicious Errors spread and entertained, and of many Sinfull Divisions thereupon made in this Kingdom from it's truly Apostolical and Established Church) become highly Profitable to the People of this Kingdom to be Duely instructed in such Points, as tend to preserve them from falling into any such Pernicious Errors and Sinfull Divisions: I have therefore made it one Principal part of my Care, to Set forth and Explain to my Congregation the great and indispensable Obligation they lie under, to *Keep Close to the Communion of the truly Apostolical Church by God's Blessing Established among us*; and to *Observe All it's Rites and Ceremonies*, as being enjoyned by Rightfull Authority, and excellently Conducive to the ends of Religion. And I cannot mention this without Returning my Unfeigned Thanks to God, that He has been pleased of his Mercy to Blest my endeavours herein with so Good Succes, as that my Congregation is already become in a very considerable measure *Religiously Conformable to the Rules of our Church*. Whether my Endeavours to discharge the other two Branches above-mentioned of my Pastoral Office may be

attended

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attended with the like Good Success, tho' it is what I cannot be assured of beforehand, yet thus much I am certainly assured of, that, let the Success prove what it will, I am bound to Discharge my Duty in each Particular. And therefore

In order to Discharge the Second Branch above-mentioned of my Pastoral Office, I have lately drawn up a Letter to Such of my Parish, as are so Unhappy as to be Seduced from the Communion of our Church; wherein I have endeavoured to Convince them of the *Great Sin* they lie under by such a *Separation*, and of the Weakness and Insufficiency of the Arguments made use of to Justifie their Practice. The Motives whereby I was induced to Apply my self to my Dissenting Parishioners by way of *Letter*, were chiefly the many and great Inconveniences, that usually attend *Oral Discourses*; and the same Motives have likewise induced me to follow the same method in this Application of my self now to you; in reference to which I shall only observe here in general, that

The Design of this *Present Letter* is to Discharge the Last Branch above-mentioned of my Pastoral Office: to which end I beg leave to lay before You some few Characters or Marks of a *False Teacher* or *Minister*, namely such as I judge most Pertinent and Proper to Undeceive both You and your Followers, and thereby to draw You off from any longer misguiding Others, and Others (particularly such as are of my *Own Parish*, and for whom therefore I have a more Immediate Concern) from being any longer misguided by You, or any other Teacher of your Principles or Perswasion.

Having thus Premised what I thought fit (by way of Introduction or Preface) to acquaint you with, concerning the Weighty Occasion and Good Intention of this Letter: I proceed now to that which is to be the Subject matter of it, viz. those Characters or Marks of a *False Teacher* or *Minister*, which seem most Pertinent and Proper to Convince You and your Followers both of your and their most Unhappy State and Condition.

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A False Teacher then is to be distinguished and known by the *Falseness of his Doctrines*, and also by the *Falseness of his Mission*. Either of these Singly is sufficient to denominate Him, that is Faulty therein, to be a False Teacher. He that propagates False Principles or Doctrines, thereby Alone becomes a False Teacher, though he may be Truly Sent to Teach: and on the other hand he that takes upon him to Teach, having no other than a False Mission, thereby Alone becomes a False Teacher, though what he Teaches may be very True and Orthodox. Wherefore He that not only takes upon him to Teach by a False Mission, but also Teaches False Doctrines, becomes a False Teacher on a Double account, and so in a Higher degree. Whether this Last case, tho' very sad and deplorable, be not your Own, I desire you seriously to consider and Examine by the Following Particulars; which I shall reduce under two General Heads, accordingly as they relate to the two General Marks above-mentioned, whereby a *False Teacher* or *Minister* is to be distinguished and known.

I.

To begin then with what relates to the First General Character or Mark of a *False Teacher*, viz. *Falseness of Doctrine*. That he that propagates or teaches False Principles or Doctrines, do's thereby become a False Teacher, is a Truth which carries along with it such clearness of Evidence, as neither to need nor admit of any clearer proof. 'Tis likewise very obvious, that by *False Principles* or *Doctrines* are throughout this whole Letter to be understood such, as are contrary to what is set forth unto us in Holy Writ for our Direction or Imitation.

What more particularly deserves Notice and Observation is, that a man may be justly said to *Teach* and *Propagate* False Principles and Doctrines, not only by *Teaching* them *Professedly* and *Openly* in the Publick Assembly of his Followers, but also by *any other method whatsoever*, made use of by him to *Intimate* or *make Known* to his Followers, that he *Approves* of such their Principles and Practices.

And

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And in this Latitude I am frequently to be understood, where for Brevity's sake I expressly make use of only the word [Teach.]

Having thus cleared the way, I proceed to lay before you several Instances of *False Principles* and *Doctrines*, whereby the *False Teachers* of these times seduce and misguide the People of this Kingdom. Thus

1. We read *Luke 22. 41.* that our Saviour being about to Pray, Kneeled down (and as if this was not a Posture Humble enough on so extraordinary an occasion, he further Fell on his Face, and that on the very Ground, *Mat. 26. 39. Mar. 14. 35.*) and then Prayed. In like manner the First Martyr Stephen, when he was just going to be put to death, Kneeled down, and then Prayed for his Murderers, *Act 7. 60.* So Peter Kneeled down and Prayed, *Act 9. 40.* So Paul Kneeled down and Prayed, *Act 20. 36.* Nay, not Paul only, but All the rest of the company with him Kneeled down, though it was on the bare shore, before they Prayed, *Act 21. 5.* Since then 'tis thus evident from the example of our Saviour himself, and the Protomartyr Stephen, and the two great Apostles Peter and Paul, &c. that Kneeling is a very suitable and proper posture for Prayer, do's it not hence manifestly follow, that whosoever shall teach that Kneeling is not a Posture very Suitable or Proper for Prayer, but a piece of Superstition, He is justly to be condemned as a False Teacher?

2. Not to mention several Forms of Prayer (or the like) prescribed by God himself in the Old Testament, 'tis evident from the New Testament, that our Saviour composed and taught his Disciples a Prayer, to be used not only as a Pattern, but also as a Constant standing Form to the World's End. For our Saviour's words to his Disciple are *Mat. 6. 9. Therefore Pray ye Oυτως; Thus or So, Our Father, &c.* and *Luke 11. 2. When ye Pray, say (what? why this very Form,) Our Father, &c.* And that it was our Saviour's design, that this Form should be used as long as Christianity

nity it self lasted in this World, is plain from his Limiting no time, after which the Use of this Prayer should cease and be no longer requisite; but on the contrary expressing himself Indefinitely and without any Limitation. Thus *Luke 11. 2. When*, i. e. *Whosoever* (for the Greek word is the Indefinite Particle ὅταν whosoever, or in whatever Period of Time or Age of the World) ye Pray, say, Our Father, &c. And in like manner, since the Reason mentioned by St. Matthew (chap. 6. 7, 8) why our Saviour taught his Disciples this Form, is such as will hold good to the end of the World; doth it not thence rationally follow, that the Use of the Lord's Prayer enjoyned for that Reason is also to hold good to the World's end?

Again, that our Saviour thought Forms of Prayer very Allowable and most highly Acceptable to God, is evident from his own Example in the Garden. Where as we read that he Prayed three times that the Cup might pass from him, so we read likewise that he Prayed Saying the same words, *Mat. 26. 44. Mar. 14. 39.* Now if the Extraordinary occasion, on which our Lord then Prayed, be considered, 'tis very rational to suppose, that had our Lord known New or Extempore Prayers to be more Acceptable to his Father, than the same Prayer once or more Repeated, he would not have failed each time to have made use of a New Extempore Prayer, that to his Prayer (being on such account more Acceptable to God) might also be the more Effectual to his obtaining what he so Earnestly desired. Wherefore on the contrary, since our Lord did not each time make use of a New Extempore Prayer, but contented himself to Repeat the same Prayer; it manifestly follows that our Lord well knew, that his Prayer would be never the less Acceptable to his Father, tho' it was no other but the same Repeated; and that New or Extempore Prayers are not in any respect more Acceptable to God than saying the Same Prayer Again and Again. Nay, if a comparison is to be made, it may be fairly inferr'd, that our Lord looked upon a Sound Form of Prayer, how oft soever Repeated, more Acceptable to God than New Extempore Prayers; for as much as he chose rather to Repeat the

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the Same Prayer several times, than to make each time a New Extempore Prayer (tho' he was the Best Able to do it of All men, that ever were or shall be) and that upon the most Extraordinary and Pressing occasion.

I desire therefore that it may be most seriously and impartially considered, whether from what has been said in the two foregoing Paragraphs it do's not evidently follow that Whosoever Teaches, that *Using Forms of Prayer is not most highly Acceptable to God, or Less Acceptable than, or not Equally Acceptable as, New or Extempore Prayers,* do's not thereby teach what is manifestly Repugnant both to the Directions of our Saviour to his Disciples, and also to our Saviour's Own Practice, and do's not thereby justly fall under the Censure of a False Teacher?

2. Our Saviour's Behaviour in the Garden affords us Another Particular very Pertinent to our Purpose. For as the occasion, on which our Saviour there Prayed, was (as has been already observed) most Extraordinary and Urgent; so Reason would have easily suggested to us, (had Revelation been wholly silent in the matter) that our Saviour on such an Extraordinary Occasion Prayed likewise with an Extraordinary Earnestness or Fervency of Devotion. But there is no need to have Recourse to Reason on this account, since St. Luke expressly tells us, Chap. 22. v. 44. that Christ being in an Agony Prayed more Earnestly, that is, more Earnestly than on other Ordinary Occasions. Since then our Saviour Prayed Saying the Same words, or (which comes to the Same) used a Form of Prayer, at that very time when he Prayed more Earnestly, than even He himself was wont to Pray at other ordinary times, and consequently with the greatest Earnestness Man is capable of, is it not a natural consequence, that in the esteem of our Blessed Saviour, Forms of Prayer are no *Less* or *Hindrances to Earnestness or Fervency of Devotion*, but rather *Helps to the Same*? Wherefore it ought to be well considered, whether he that Teaches, that *Forms of Prayer are Less and Hindrances to Earnestness of Prayer, or not so conducive to Promote Earnestness or Fervency of Devotion as*

New

New or Extempore Prayers; do's not thereby Teach, what is manifestly repugnant to the Judgement and Practice of our Blessed Saviour himself, and consequently doth not thereby deserve to be accounted a False Teacher.

4. Our Saviour expressly assures us *John 3. 34.* that *Gave not the Spirit by measure unto him*, that is, that He had the Spirit in an Unlimited manner, and therefore in a manner Infinitely Above what any other man ever had or shall have the Spirit in. But now our Saviour, though thus filled with the Spirit, yet prayed even in his greatest Extremity *Saying the same words several times (Mat. 26. 44. Mar. 14. 39.) or by Form.* 'Tis therefore Manifest, that a Minister or any other Person may Pray by Form, and notwithstanding be indued with as Great a measure of the Spirit as any mere man is capable of. Wherefore it deserves consideration, whether he that Teaches, that *To Pray by Form is a Quenching of the Spirit, or is a Sign that he that so Prays by Form, is not endued with the Spirit as much as Any other that Prays without Form;* do's not thereby Teach what is manifestly Inconsistent with this instance of our Saviour's Example, and consequently is not justly to be ranked among the Number of False Teachers.

5. To the foregoing Instances drawn either from the Directions or from the Practice of our Saviour himself, let us add that Standing Rule delivered by the Preacher *Eccles. 5. 2. Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be Hasty to utter any thing before God, &c.* But now surely it must be granted, that he that Prays by Form, is much more Secured from transgressing this Rule, than he that Prays without Form, even supposing he doth use some General Premeditation; and still much more Secured, than he that Prays without Form or Any Premeditation at All. For as much as he that Prays by Form, may thoroughly Weigh beforehand what he is to Utter in his Prayer, and so may be Sure to use no Expression or Single Word, that may be stiled *Rash* or *Hasty* or any other way *Undecent:* whereas he that Prays without Form, though he may make

use of some general Premeditation beforehand, yet cannot thereby be sufficiently secured from any Accident so disturbing him, as to make him let fall Rash or Hasty Words or Expressions: and he that Prays without both Form and Premeditation, is still more exposed to fall into Rashness or Hastiness of Words and Expressions. The plain consequence of All which is this; that he that Prays by Form do's thereby Pray in such a manner, as enables him to Pray more Agreeable to the Rule above-mentioned, than he that Prays without Form and Extempore. Whosoever therefore Teaches the contrary, *That Praying without Form and Extempore is to be preferr'd to Praying by Form, as being more Agreeable to the Will of God;* doth he not thereby Teach what is Inconsistent with the afore-mentioned Rule, and so Repugnant to the Revealed Will of God, which is the only sure Standard we are to go by; and therefore ought not Such an One to consider, how he can avoid the Imputation of a False Teacher?

6. To the foregoing Instances relating to Praying by Form or without Form, I shall next add an Instance in relation to *Preaching by Book or Without Book.* To which purpose consult *Jer. 36. 4, 5, 6, &c.* *Baruch wrote from the Mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, &c.* The Inference I make from hence is this, viz. that the Wisdom of God judged it Equally Efficacious to declare his Will by reading it Out of a Book, as to declare it by Word of Mouth; which being put into the Present way of Speaking is as much as to say, that the Wisdom of God judges it *Equally Edifying to Read a Sermon or Preach within Book,* as to *Preach without Book.* For 'tis evident from Vers. 3. and 7. that the Divine Goodness was Desirous to bring the Jews to a sincere and timely Repentance; and therefore 'tis but rational to suppose that the Divine Goodness was willing to make use of the most Efficacious ordinary method to this great end and purpose. Wherefore had the Divine Wisdom known that Delivering his Will by Word of Mouth or Preaching without Book is a method much more Efficacious and Edifying, than Delivering

ing his Will or Preaching within Book : 'tis not to be supposed, but that the Providence of God either would have so ordered matters, as that the Prophet Jeremiah himself should have delivered his message by Word of mouth; or else would have ordered and enabled *Beruch* to have so Delivered it, and not to have Read it Out of a Book. Wherefore whosoever Teaches, that *Preaching within Book* is of it self Less Efficacious or Edifying than *Preaching without Book*: doth he not Teach thereby what is very Unwarrantable and Disagreeable to the method of Divine Goodness in making Known frequently his Will unto Men: and therefore doth it not behove such an One to consider, how he can acquit himself from the Charge of a False Teacher?

I might add some more Arguments to prove the Folly and Falseness of such an Assertion or Doctrine, but shall forbear mentioning such of them here, as I have taken notice of in my Letter to a Dissenting Parishioner, (p. 39.) to which therefore I refer you for them; and shall only subjoyn here Two Considerations, one in reference to Prayer, the other to Preaching, which though not drawn from Scripture, yet ought to be of Great Moment or Weight with Dissenters (if they would Act steadily to any sort of Principles) to convince them of the Wrong Esteem they have for *Praying without Form & Preaching without Book*.

In reference then to *Praying without Form* or *Extempore*, I desire it may be consider'd, by whom this way of Praying was at First introduced among us; that it was one (a) *Commin* a Popish Fryar, who in the Ninth of Queen Elizabeth (in order to draw off the People from our Church, and so to further the ends of Popery) began to make use of the Artifice of Praying Extempore, which he did so Dexterously, and with such an outward seeming Fervour, that he thereby deluded Many so far, as to draw them off from our Communion, and was amply Rewarded for it by the Pope of Rome. After him one (b) *Thomas Heath* a Jesuite followed the same Crafty method, crying out

a See Foxes and Firebrands, page 7, &c. b See the Same, p. 17.
against

against our Liturgy or Common Prayer, and crying up Spiritual or Extempore Prayers, and declaring upon Examination, that (a) he had been six years in England, labouring to refine the Protestants, and to take off all Smacks of Ceremonies, and to make the Church Purer. Whence by the way the Dissenters may learn, that their Pleas *Against our Common Prayer and Ceremonies, and For their Extempore Prayers and greater Purity of Worship,* are of no better than Popish Intervention, and such as were put into their Mouths by the Popish Emisaries or Priests.

In reference to *Preaching without Book*, 'tis notoriously known to All that have any tolerable Knowledge of the Papists, that 'tis the Practice also of the Popish Priests to Preach without Book, insomuch that Preaching within Book is (very seldom or) never used by them. Wherefore

The Inference to be deduced from the two foregoing Paragraphs is this: That, since 'tis a received Principle among the Dissenters, that 'tis not Expedient or Good to Symbolize or Agree with the Papists in things belonging to Divine Worship; it clearly follows from this their Own Principle that they ought not to have so great an Esteem either for Extempore Prayer or Preaching without Book, since they are no other than what have been or are Practised by the Popish Priests themselves: but on the contrary the Dissenters ought to Dislike their own Teachers for thus Agreeing with the Popish Priests, and to Like the Ministers of the Church of England for Disagreeing with the said Popish Priests in the said Particulars. Whereas the Dissenters acting in these cases directly Contrary to their Own Principles above mentioned, 'tis manifest, that they are not steadily guided or governed by any Well-grounded or Firm Principles, but act By or Against the very Same Principle, as Fancy, Humour, Perverseness, Interest, or some such like Unwarrantable Motive do's happen to induce them. For otherwise how is it to be Accounted for, why the Dissenters should make such an Outcry *Against the Surplice*

* See more in the Preface to the Treatise Entituled, *The Unreasonableness of Separation*, beginning at page 17.

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and other Ceremonies of our Church, only because we Agree therein with the Papists; and at the same time cry Up so much Extempore Prayer and Preaching without Book used in their Meetings, when therein They Agree likewise with the Papists, or else learned such Artifices from the Papists.

7. We learn from the *I Corinlh. chap. 3. 3, 4, 18, 21.* and *I Cor. 4. 6, 7, &c.* that 'tis Unwarrantable, either on one hand for Common Christians to be Puffed up for One Minister against Another, or on the other hand for any Minister to Countenance or Give way to Others being thus Puffed up for Him; though it be on account of some Real Extraordinary Gift of the Spirit, wherewith He may be really endued and therein excell Another; and tho' the Division made thereupon do's not proceed so far, as to an Actual and Open Separation in respect of Church-Communion. Doth it not then clearly follow from hence, that 'tis much more Unwarrantable for the Common Dissenters to be puffed up for their Teachers against their Parish-Ministers, or for the Dissenting Teachers to Countenance and Give way to their Followers being thus puffed up for them; and that so far as to Cause or at least Help to promote and carry on an Open Separation, even supposing the Dissenting Teachers were Really endued with some Spiritual Gifts, which our Parish-Ministers were not endued with? And therefore still how much more Unwarrantable are such Practices of the Dissenting both Teachers and Followers, when they are on account Not of any Real Spiritual Gifts, wherein the Dissenting Teachers do truly excell the Parochial Ministers, but only on account of some Imaginary Gifts, or Qualifications erroneously looked upon as Gifts of the Spirit? as may appear from these two following Considerations:

First, that nothing can be truly esteemed as a Certain and Infallible Evidence of any Spiritual Gift, which may be performed by mere Natural Abilities. But now those Effects, whereby the Dissenters pretend to prove, that their Teachers are Spiritually Gifted, may be very easily performed by no other than Natural Endowments. For let it be considered, whether a man may not be sufficiently fitted

fitted or qualified to Pray Extempore or without Form, and to Preach without Book, if he has but these three Qualifications, a Good Memory, a Good Assurance, and Moderate Industry. But now may not a man be endued with All these, and yet be very far from being Spiritually Gifted? Nay, (not to observe, that such as fall short of Common Reason, yet are frequently found to have very Good Memories; and such as want Common Honesty, are frequently found to have the Largest share of Assurance) 'tis undeniable, that All the three fore-mentioned Qualifications are Equally Common to Infidels and Heathens as well as Christians; which surely is a Sufficient Proof, that they are to be by no means looked upon as Spiritual Gifts. Whence it follows that a man may be *a very Expert Artist at Praying Extempore or without Form, and Preaching without Book,* and yet be *very far from being Spiritually Gifted.*

Secondly, if Praying Extempore or without Form, and Preaching without Book, be Certain Effects and so Infallible Tokens of being Spiritually Gifted; then the Dissenters must Allow, that the Popish Priests are Spiritually Gifted as well as their Teachers; for as much as the Former can or do perform Both as Dexterously as the Latter. Whence follows One of these two Consequences, either that the Dissenters do *very ill in bearing such an Aversion to the Popish Priests, who by their own Arguments are Persons Spiritually Gifted as well as their own Teachers:* or else that Persons may *Pray Extempore and Preach without Book, and yet be not Spiritually Gifted.* And if so, then there wants some Better Arguments for proving the Dissenting Teachers to be Spiritually Gifted, than their Knack at Extempore Prayer and Preaching without Book.

From the whole then that has been said upon this Point, doth it not evidently appear, that Whosoever Teaches, that *Praying without Form or Extempore, and Preaching without Book are true and certain signs of being Spiritually Gifted;* and that on account hereof the People may leave their own Parish-Ministers, and follow Dissenting Teachers; the same do's thereby Teach what is Groundless, and contrary

trary to Truth, and to the fore-cited Directions of St. Paul, and therefore do's but give too just Occasion to be looked upon as a False Teacher?

8. That it is our Bounden Duty on one hand to *Return Solemn and Publick Thanks* to Almighty God for any Great or Publick Blessing vouchsafed unto us, and on the other hand to humble our selves by *Publick Fasting* on account of our National Sins against God; is a Truth confirmed and enforced by Divine Revelation, and (as may be reasonably supposed) acknowledged in general by your self, Sir, and your Followers. For it may be reasonably supposed, that upon this Principle it is, that You and your Followers Religiously observe the Fifth of November, and the Thanksgiving-days and Fast-days that have been of late years appointed in Relation to the War against the Common Enemy. And indeed so far you do *Very Well* and what is your *Bounden Duty*: but then it is much to be wondered at, why the same Principle should not carry you further, and *Equally* engage you to a Religious observance of the other Thanksgiving-days and Fast-days, that are appointed to be kept on the like Religious account, and by the Same (if not Greater) Authority: why it should not Equally oblige you to observe the 20th of January, or twenty Ninth of May; since the Murder of King Charles I. and the Subversion of the Regal Government and Apostolical Church then Established, is surely to be Deplored as a most Heinous Sin; and since the Restoration of the Regal Family and Government, together with the Apostolical Form of Church-Government, is surely to be acknowledged as a very Signal Mercy and Blessing by All Such, as are not professed and inveterate Enemies to Monarchy and the Present Establishment both in Church and State.

Again, how comes it to pass that the same Principle doth not *Equally* oblige you to the Religious observance of the other *Stated Fast*s of our Church on account of our Sins, and of those *Festivals* appointed in reference to the several Signal Circumstances of our *Redemption &c.* For

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is not the Birth of Christ, his Circumcision, his Manifestation to the Gentiles, his Presentation in the Temple, his Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension &c. to be esteemed as Great Blessings as those commemorated on the Fifth of November, or the other occasional Thanksgiving days yearly appointed? Are not the Spiritual Blessings we have received by means of the Apostles and Evangelists &c. no less Valuable, than any Blessings we can receive by the Success of our Arms? And if so, how can you possibly account for your Refusing to observe the Holy-days of our Church, appointed to be observed only by way of *Thanksgiving* for the Spiritual Mercies and Blessings Vouchsafed to the World either by *our Saviour* or by means of the respective *Apostles* &c. commemorated on such days, or on somewhat the like *Spiritual* account? Surely was the Case not your Own, but Others, you would be induced thereby to believe, that Such Persons had at the bottom a Greater Concern for Success against the *French King*, than for that most Inestimable Victory obtained by *Christ over Sin, the Devil, and Death it self:* and that whatever pretences Such Men might make *Outwardly* of being more *Spiritual* than others, they were *Inwardly* and at the Heart more *Carnal*, and more *Worldly-minded*.

Upon the whole therefore I desire you would seriously lay to heart, whether it doth not appear from what has been said under this Head, that to Teach that the *Observance of the Fasts or Festivals of our Church is Sinfull, Popish, Superstitious, or Unwarrantable, is the same in effect as to Teach, that 'tis Sinfull, Popish, Superstitious, or Unwarrantable to Humble our selves for Our Sins, or to Return Thanks to God on account of the most Signal Circumstances whereby our Redemption was accomplished &c.* and consequently is the same as to Teach an Erroneous and False Doctrine: and therefore that he that do's Teach so, is most justly to be accounted a False Teacher.

9. 'Tis evident from *Heb. 13. 17.* that 'tis the Duty of every Good Christian to Obey the Rulers of the Church in *All things*

things not Sinfull : as I have very largely shewn in my other Letter already mentioned (p. 5, 6, &c.) to which I refer you. Since therefore All the Rites and Ceremonies of our Church are ordained by the fore-mentioned Authority, and contain in them nothing Sinfull or Forbidden by God ; will it not necessarily follow, that *every Christian of this Realm is most strictly obliged to observe the Rites and Ceremonies of our Church, though they are Humane Ordinances* ; and that whosoever Teaches the contrary, teaches a Doctrine contrary to the Scriptures, and therefore is no other than a False Teacher ?

Moreover I desire to know, whether the *Fast-days* and *Thanksgiving-days* appointed in relation to the *War* or the *Fifth of November* be any other than *Humane Ordinances* ; and therefore the Practice of You, Sir, and your Followers in observing the *Fast-days* and *Thanksgiving-days* a-fore-mentioned do's make one of these two Consequences necessarily to arise, viz. Either that you judge it not Agreeable to the Will of God, that *Humane Ordinances* should have any place in relation to Church-matters, and nevertheless will Comply with them in the fore-mentioned respects on some Temporal or Worldly account ; or else that you judge it Agreeable to the Will of God, that *Humane Ordinances* (enacted by Lawfull Authority) should take place and be observed even in relation to Church-matters, and therefore do observe them in the respects above-mentioned, though you will not observe them in other respects, and that for no other or better reason in truth, but because you *Will not*.

Nay 'tis further to be added, that One of these Consequences being necessarily to be Allowed, (viz. Either that you *Do* or *do Not* judge it Agreeable to the Will of God, that *Humane Ordinances* should be of any Force in Religious matters) let which you think Best, be Allowed of, it will be abundantly Sufficient to prove your Practice (as to the Case before us) chargeable with (what you would be apt to call in others) Insincerity and Hypocrisy. For if you do not judge it Agreeable to God's Will, that *Humane Ordinances* should be of any Force in Religious matters,

matters, then how will you acquit your selves from Insincerity and Hypocrisy in observing those Humane Ordinances you do observe, such as the Fifth of November, the Occasional yearly Thanksgiving-days and Fast-days &c. and on the other hand if you do judge it Agreeable to God's Will, that Humane Ordinances should be of any Force in Religious matters; then how will you acquit your selves from Insincerity and Hypocrisy, in Pretending your Conscience will not permit you to observe the Stated Thanksgiving-days or Fast-days of our Church, because they are Humane Ordinances?

10. We read *Levit. 19. 30.* and *26. 2.* this Command, *Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and Reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.* Of which Command, as the Former part requires due Regard to be paid to the Sabbath or Day Sanctified or set apart for Divine Worship; so the Latter do's as strictly require due Regard to be paid to the Sanctuary or Place Sanctified (i.e. Consecrated) or set apart for Divine Worship. 'Tis therefore but highly Reasonable to conclude, that Each part of this Command was designed to be of Equal Obligation, and consequently that the obligation of the Latter as well as the Former is to be looked upon as Perpetual. And for a very good Confirmation hereof we read *Mar. 11. v. 15, 16.* that our Saviour cast out of the Temple all that bought and sold &c. and would not suffer so much as a Vessel to be carried through the Temple. Where by the way it is worthy to be observed, that the things there bought and sold, and the money-changing there mentioned, had some (*viz.* a remote) relation even to the Divine Service then in use, and yet was Forbidden by our Saviour, as unbecoming the Great Reverence due to the House of God: and also 'tis observable, that our Saviour's Prohibition runs in general terms, and so is to be understood not only in reference to the Times of Divine Service, but also in reference to All other Times, even when Divine Service was not Performing. Since therefore Reverence is to be paid to (Places Sanctified or Consecrated to Divine Worship, that is, in one word to)

Churches under the Gospel as well as under the Law; and since this Reverence is due to Such Places, not only in the time of Divine Service, but at all other times; and since Putting off the Hat is according to the Custom of this Country, one way of expressing Reverence to Places as well as Persons; will it not hence follow, that who-soever shall Teach that to shew Reverence to Churches, (particularly by Putting off the Hat, when we go into them, whether it be In or Out of the time of Divine Service,) is Superstitious and Popish, do's give just occasion to have himself censured as a False Teacher?

II. Our Saviour when he sent the Twelve Apostles forth to Preach, expressly forbids them to make any Provision for themselves, and Subjoyns this Reason, *For the Workman is worthy of his meat*, Mat. 10. 10. And the like Prohibition is also given by our Saviour to the Seventy Disciples, and that for the like Reason, viz. *For the Labourer is worthy of his Hire*, Luke 10. 7. And we are expressly assured by St. Paul, that our Saviour did hereby design to ordain, that they which Preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9. 14. to which add 1 Tim. 5. 17. Now do not these Texts plainly evince, that he is to be accounted a False Teacher, who directly contrary to Them do's Teach, that 'tis not lawfull for a Minister to receive Tithes or take Pay for Preaching; or that he is not a True Minister of the Gospel, that do's so receive Tithes or Pay? Nay, 'tis to be further observed on the contrary, that 'tis manifest from 2 Cor. 11. v. 12, 13. that the False Teachers in St. Paul's time did endeavour to Recommend themselves to the People, by preaching Freely or Refusing to take any Wages or Pay. Whence it naturally follows, that Preaching Freely or without Pay is by no means a proof or token of a True and Faithfull Minister of Christ; but on the contrary may be well looked upon only as an Artifice made use of (as in St. Paul's time, so now adays) to Seduce and Deceive unwary People: and that such as use this Artifice now adays, deserve likewise the same Character that is given by St. Paul to those that made use of it in his days, viz. Such

Such are False Apostles, Deceitfull Workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light. Therefore it is no great thing, if his Ministers also be transformed as the Ministers of Righteousness: whose End shall be according to their Works, 2 Cor. 11. v. 13, 14, 15.

These, Sir, are the Several Instances of the False Doctrines spread abroad and taught by the False Teachers of these times, which I judged most Pertinent and Proper to lay here together before you, in reference to the First General Character or mark above-mentioned of a *False Teacher*, viz. *Falseness of Doctrine*.

II.

I come now to the other General Character of a *False Teacher*, viz. *Falseness of Mission*. For that No one ought to take upon him to Teach without being duly Sent, is acknowledged by All Parties, as being Evident from Rom. 10. 15. Heb. 5. 4. &c. The Great Matter in Debate is what is requisite to a True Mission. And in reference to this Matter, I shall not stand to consider All the Several Opinions about it, but confine my self to what I judge Pertinent to your Case, and so most Proper to convince You and your Followers, that *you have not a True Mission*, or (which is the same) that (what is now adays called) *a Presbyterian Ordination is not Valid or sufficient to Authorize the Person so ordained to Teach, or to Perform any other part of the Ministerial Office*.

Now the most natural method to put an Happy Issue to this Controversy I take to be, *Laying open the True and Proper state of the Question controverted*: and this surely cannot be Better done than by considering, What it was that gave Original or Birth to this Controversy.

'Tis then too well known to require Proof, that this Controversy, as it now stands between us and you, was occasioned at the time of the Reformation from Popery, by some that were then called *Presbyters*, who took upon them to give Ordination to others; and from whom there-

fore All such as have since abetted or maintained the Validity of such Ordination have been stiled *Presbyterians*, and such an Ordination has been on the same account stiled a *Presbyterian Ordination*.

Hence it appears, that the True State of this Controversy depends upon the state of the Ministerial Office at the time of the Reformation; and that whosoever would judge aright of the Validity or Invalidity of (what has been ever since the Reformation called) *Presbyterian Ordination*, must in the First place duly inform himself, In what Sense the word *Presbyters* was taken at the time of the said Reformation, What Order of the Ministry was then distinguished or known by that Name, and with what Ministerial Power those then called *Presbyters* were Invested by virtue of the Ordination they themselves had Received.

Whence by the way I suppose it will also be allowed by Judicious Persons, that your Common Method of having Recourse *Immediately* or in the *very First* place to *Scripture*, is not so Proper. For the Question is Not, Whether such as were called *Presbyters* *in the times of the New Testament*, had the Power of Ordination; but the Question we are Concerned about, is this, Whether such as were called *Presbyters* *at the time of the Reformation*, had the Power of Ordination. And therefore, Since the Use or Signification of Words may and frequently do's Alter (insomuch as the Same Word, which in one Age was promiscuously applied to Two Offices, in another Age may be appropriated to One, and that the Inferior Office, or on the contrary, &c.) and since by consequence the Sameness of Name is no conclusive proof of the Sameness of Office or Authority: it must be Allowed, that though it should be Granted, that Those called *Presbyters* in the New Testament had the Power of Ordination; yet 'twill by no means thence follow, that Those called *Presbyters* at the time of the Reformation had likewise the Power of Ordination.

In short then the Main stress of the Controversy we are concerned in, lies upon the Use or Signification of the

the Name *Presbyters* at the time of the *Reformation*, which therefore coines next to be spoken to.

'Tis then well known and acknowledged by All your Own Writers, that *At* and for some Hundred Years *Before* the *Reformation*, the Distinction of the Three Ministerial Orders, as they now stand in the Church of England, had obtained in All parts of the Christian World: and that according to this Distinction, as Those of the Uppermost Order of the Three were *At* and for some Hundred years *Before* the *Reformation*, Alone stiled *Bishops*, and were Alone Invested with the *Power of Ordination*; so the name of *Presbyters* was *At* and for some Hundred Years *Before* the *Reformation* applied only to Those that were of the Second Ministerial Order, and so *Inferior* to *Bishops*, and consequently *Not Invested with the Power of Ordination*.

Since then it has been already observed, that the Question in Debate is, Whether such as were stiled *Presbyters* at the time of the *Reformation* had the *Power of Ordination*; and since 'tis as Certain as any thing can be made by the Universal consent of Ecclesiastical History, and since 'tis hereupon no other than What is Acknowledged by the Learned Men of your Own Perswasion, that the name of *Presbyters* did, *At* and for some Hundred Years *Before* the *Reformation*, denote only such Ministers as were *Inferior* to *Bishops*, and were *Never Invested with the Power of Ordination*, hence (I think) it clearly follows, that the True State of the Question controverted by us, is in short and plain English this, *wz.*

"Whether a Person in *Holy Orders*, though never Invested Himself with the *Power of Ordination*, can nevertheless be truly said to have the just *Power of Ordination*, or (which comes to the same) can nevertheless Duely and Rightly take upon him to give *Ordination* to Others.

This is the True state of the Question under Debate, put into plain English, and freed from the Ambiguous Signification of the Word *Presbyter*, and restrained only to that Peculiar Signification of the said Word, which belongs to this Present Controversy, as has been above shewn.

Now the Question being thus truely and plainly stated, on which Side of it (Affirmative or Negative) the Truth lies, seems to be so clear, as to be in a manner Self-evident. For *Common Reason* teaches us, that No one can duly act *Beyond* the Commission he receives ; or *Beyond* that Degree of Authority, wherewith he has been Invested. And if so, then it follows, that such *Presbyters* as are concerned in this Controversy, could Not duly Ordain, since they were never Invested with the Power of Ordination ; and consequently, that by taking upon them to Ordain, they acted *Beyond* that Ministerial Commission they had received, or *Beyond* that Degree of Ministerial Authority, wherewith they had been Invested ; and therefore acted *Unduly* and *Unwarrantably*.

To the Testimony of *Common Reason* may be added the Greater and more Weighty Testimony of *Revelation*. (And indeed the Question being thus truely stated, Recourse is Now very Properly to be had to the *Scriptures* for Determining, which Side of the Question is to be Embraced, as being Agreeable to God's Revealed Will.) As therefore *St. Paul* argues in the fore-cited *Rom. 10. 15.* *How can they Preach, except they be sent, namely to Preach ?* so is it to be argued in this case, *How can they ordain, except they be sent, namely to Ordain ?*

But there seems to be no Occasion to Insist on the Testimony either of *Reason* or *Revelation*, since what they are brought to prove in the Case before us, is *Granted* (if not Expressly, yet in Effect) by your Own Party. For whilst you go about to justify the Validity of your Presbyterian Ordination, by endeavouring to shew that the *Presbyters* in the New Testament were Invested with Apostolical Authority, as to the Permanent or Standing Parts of the Apostolical Office, and consequently were Invested with the Power of Ordination : you do Implicitly or in Effect Grant and Acknowledge the Main Point, that the Church of England requires to be Granted and Acknowledged, to wit, that *No one can duly or rightfully Ordain, without being Himself First duly invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination*. And so far you are in the Right : your unhappy Error

Error lies in this, that you seem not thoroughly to Understand, or sufficiently to be Aware (of the *Promiscuous* and consequently *Ambiguous* use of the word *Presbyter*, whence it comes to pass) that though it be certainly true, that Such as are Invested with the Full extent of the Standing Apostolical Power, are Invested with the Power of Ordination; and though it should also be true, that Those called Presbyters in the New Testament, were thus Invested with the Full Extent of the standing Apostolical Power: yet Both these do not Avail you Any thing towards the Justification of your Case; for as much as what has been ever since the Reformation called *Presbyterian Ordination*, was at first brought up, and has been ever since continued, by such *Presbyters* as were *Never themselves Invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination*; and consequently such an Ordination is not a Due and Valid Ordination.

And thus I have by (what I think to be) a very Natural and Clear Method shewn, that the *Presbyterian Ordination*, which has been practised in this Kingdom since the Reformation from Popery, and which Alone is concerned in the Controversy between the Church of England and your Party, is by no means *Valid and sufficient to Authorize Any one to take upon him the Exercise of any part of the Ministerial Office*: whence it will follow, that He that do's upon such an Undue Ordination or *False Mission* take upon him to Teach, is a *False Teacher*.

Though what has been already laid before you, do's not only prove Directly, that your *Presbyterian Ordination* is *Invalid and Insufficient*; but also that All that is usually alledged by your Party out of the *New Testament*, do's by no means *Properly belong to*, and therefore can by no means *Justifie* such an Ordination: nay, though what is said in my other Letter (pag. 25, 26.) is sufficient to take off All the Force of those Inferences, which are drawn by your Party from the *New Testament*: yet however to give you All the Satisfaction I possibly can, I shall not pass by such Arguments, as your Party is wont to draw out of the *New Testament* to This purpose, but shall here consider them

more distinctly and fully, and shew the Weakness of Each of them.

1. To begin with *Phil. I. I. Paul* — to *All the Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons.* Now some of your Writers are wont to infer, that by the Plural Word [*Bishops*] are here to be understood *Presbyters*, because in the Sense the Word is now used among us of the Church of England, there can be (at least Regularly) but One Bishop of One Place: which Inference seems to be owing to mere *Inadverency*, and therefore but *very Weak*. For this Epistle is not directed to the *Bishops Of Philippi*, but *At Philippi*: and surely no One can deny, but though there could be Regularly but *One Bishop Of Philippi*, yet there might be *Many Bishops At Philippi*, when this Epistle was either Written or at least to be Delivered. And there are not wanting Rational Grounds for supposing, that this Epistle was to be Delivered to an *Assembly of Bishops called together to Philippi*. However to convince you of the great Weakness of the foregoing Inference, I dare appeal to you your self, whether an Epistle or Letter may not at this Present time be very truly and properly Directed to the *Bishops At London*, or *At Westminster*, though there is *but One Bishop Of London*, and *not so much as One of Westminster*. Thus you see, that from the *Plurality of Bishops* mentioned in the fore-cited Text it can by no means be Conclusively inferred, that by the said *Bishops* are to be understood *Presbyters*, much less that the *Power of Ordination do's appertain to Presbyters*. The other Argument made use of by your Writers from this *Phil. I. I.* shall be taken notice of under the two ensuing Texts.

2. Another place of Scripture made use of by your Writers is, *I Tim. 3.* from which Chapter they infer, that it being not Probable, that St. *Paul* should give Rules concerning *Bishops* and *Deacons*, and none concerning *Presbyters*; therefore 'tis but rational to suppose, that *Bishops* in Verse 1. are put to denote *Presbyters*. Now (in Answer to this way of Arguing, I might here shew, that it is

is Such as you your selves will not Stand by, or Allow of in a like Case: but because this will more conveniently fall under the Consideration of the Text to be next mentioned, I shall therefore omit it here, and) I shall only Desire that it may be Considered, Why it may not be Altogether as Rational to suppose, that *Presbyters* may be denoted by *Deacons*? V. 8. Sure I am, the word Διάκονος do's literally signifie no more than *Ministers*, and therefore the *Presbyters* of those times might by the Apostle be well enough stiled Διάκονοι, just as *Presbyters* are now adays called, and that most frequently, *Ministers*. Add hereunto, 1st. that nothing is contained in the Rules there given concerning those that are there stiled *Deacons*, but what is very applicable to *Presbyters*. 2dly. that I desire you to produce some instance in the New Testament, where the words *Deacons* and *Presbyters* are mentioned Together, or by way of distinction: and therefore 3dly. that there is no Reason in *Scripture* (for I would have it observed, that I am Now Arguing upon your own Principle, which will allow of nothing for Proof, but what may be produced from *Scripture*) why the word *Deacons* either in 1 Tim. 3. 8. or Phil. 1. 1. should be understood of *Deacons* properly so called; and therefore it may very well be understood of *Presbyters*. And thus you see, that Neither Place of *Scripture* already mentioned will afford you a Conclusive Argument, whereby you may prove that *Presbyters* were *so much as called Bishops*, *much less that they had the Power of Ordination*. What more might be said in order to shew, that this 1 Tim. 3. (as also Phil. 1. 1.) makes nothing for you, will be (as I have above intimated) very conveniently taken notice of in the Consideration of the next passages of *Scripture*. Wherfore

3. Another passage of *Scripture* urged by your Party is Tit. 1. 5, 7. *For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest Ordain (Presbyters or) Elders — For a Bishop must be blameless &c.* The inference drawn by your Writers from hence is, that the word *Bishop* in v. 7. is to be referred to *Elders* in v. 5. Well, and what do's thence follow, that

Presbyters have the Power of Ordination? By no means. For tho' it should be allowed that *Bishop* in v. 7. of this Chapter doth belong to *Elders* in v. 5. and also that *Bishop* in 1 Tim. 3. 1. do denote or include *Presbyters* or *Elders*; yet after all Both these Allowances will only prove the *Promiscuous* use of the word *Bishop*, which is Not denied, but will by no means prove the *Power of Ordination* to belong to *Presbyters*, or such as are in the two fore-cited Places called *Bishops*. For neither in 1 Tim. 3. nor in Tit. 1. is there Any one Particular mentioned, whence it can be Inferr'd, much less Proved, that the *Power of Ordination* did belong to such as are there styled *Bishops*. Nay in Tit. 1. there are some Particulars, which afford very good Grounds for Inferring, that the *Power of Ordination* did not belong to Such an one as is there v. 7. styled a *Bishop*; one of which Particulars I shall take notice of in the very next Paragraph, and another in a more proper place.

Again then (and to come now to that Way of Arguing which though made use of by your Party in one Case, yet I above intimated would not be allowed of by you in a Like Case which I shall here mention, viz. as your Writers are wont to Argue, that it is not probable that St. Paul should in Phil. 1. 1. direct his Epistle to *Bishops* and *Deacons* without taking notice of *Presbyters*; and in Tim. 3. should give Rules concerning *Bishops* and *Deacons*, and none concerning *Presbyters*; and therefore it is but rational to suppose, that *Presbyters* must be denoted in the fore-mentioned places by *Bishops*: so in like manner) it may be here argued, that it is not Probable that *Titus* was to Ordain only *Elders* and no *Deacons*; and by consequence it is not probable that St. Paul should here design to give *Titus* Rules only concerning *Elders*, and not also concerning *Deacons*; and therefore according to your fore-mentioned way of Arguing, 'tis but rational to suppose, that under the general word *Bishop* v.7. are to be comprehended *Deacons* as well as *Presbyters*; especially since there is nothing in the literal signification of the words Επίσκοπος and Διάκονος, which hinders them from being applied to the same Persons. And indeed according to this Interpretation

tion the Rules of St. Paul given to *Titus* will be Full or Answerable to All the Cases requisite to be understood, and may be thus Paraphrased: *For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest — Ordain Elders in every City — If any be blameless — For (not to stand giving Distinct Rules proper to each Ministerial Degree, viz. to Presbyters properly so called, and also to Deacons properly so called; it will be sufficient to say in general, that whosoever is to be admitted by you into Any Ministerial Care of, or Inspection over the Church, that is, in one general word) a Bishop must be blameless &c.* Thus you see, that according to your own way of Arguing Deacons as well as Presbyters may be very well understood by the general name of *Bishops* in this *Tit.* 1. 7. and therefore must be *Equally* allowed to have the power of Ordination: which is nevertheless what you your selves Deny in respect of Deacons, and therefore what with Equal truth may likewise be Denied by Us in respect of Presbyters. And this will still appear more clearly, from what I shall have occasion to say, in the consideration of the Text I shall next proceed to.

4. The Text I mean is, 1 Pet. 5. 1. *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder* (to which may be added 2 John 1. and 3 John 1.) Hence, say your Writers, it appears that the *Apostles* were *Presbyters*: Ay certainly, and Who ever Denied it? But doth it hence appear, (what ought to be proved by your Writers, if they would prove any thing to the purpose,) that the *Apostles* were *only* or *no other, than Presbyters*, or (which comes to the same) that *every Presbyter is an Apostle?* Certainly no. For though a Superior Order do's frequently presuppose and include All it's relative Inferior Orders, yet in no case do's the Contrary obtain, as being Unnatural and so Irrational. To give you two or three Familiar Instances: In respect of *University-Degrees* 'tis well known, that the Degree of *Master* or *Doctor* in any Faculty do's presuppose and include the Degree of *Bachelour* in the same Faculty: Likewise in the Profession of *Common Law* the Degree of a *Serjeant* presupposes or includes that of a *Barrister*; and

and Lastly in Nobility the Degree or Dignity of a *Duke* presupposes and includes the Dignity of a *Marques*, *Earl* and *Baron*: but in neither of the three fore-mentioned Instances do's the Contrary hold good. And just so is it in the Ministerial Orders, the *Apostolical* or (as it is otherwise now called) the *Episcopal* Order presupposes and includes the Order of *Presbyter*, and also of *Deacon*; but not on the contrary. Whence it comes to pass, that (as it do's not follow, that, because every *Master* or *Doctor* is also a *Bachelour* in the same Faculty, therefore every *Bachelour* is a *Master* or *Doctor* ; or because every *Sergeant at Law* is also a *Barrister*, therefore every *Barrister* is a *Sergeant* ; or lastly because every *Duke* is a *Marques* &c. therefore every *Marques* &c. is a *Duke*: so) in the Case before us, though every *Apostle* or *Person* of the *Apostolical*, otherwise called the *Episcopal* Order be also a *Presbyter* or *Deacon*; yet it doth not thence follow, that every *Presbyter* or *Deacon* is a *Person* of the *Apostolical* or *Episcopal* Order. And thus you may see, that from the fore-cited words of St. Peter or of St. John, no Conclusive proof can be drawn for the Equality of the Order of *Presbyters* with the *Apostolical* or *Episcopal* Order; but only that the word *Presbyter* was sometimes applied to the *Apostolical* or *Episcopal* Order, particularly by way of *Humility* or *Condescension*, which (I think) will seem to any Unbiass'd Reader to be the Motive of St. Peter's stilting himself in the fore-cited place Συμπατρίτερος. Not to add, that according to his example 'tis well known that the Common Practice of the *Bishops* of our Church, is no other than this, viz; for Any one of them, when he writes to a *Presbyter*, to subscribe himself, *Your Affectionate Brother*: which he do's (not as *Bishop*, for in this strict sente he is not a *Brother*, but a *Superior* to the *Presbyter*; but in St. Peter's language) as Συμπατρίτης, i. e. as being also a *Presbyter*.

But further yet, to make you still more sensible of the great Weakness of the Inference drawn by your Party from these Texts of St. Peter and St. John, I desire it may be consider'd, that if St. Peter's or St. John's applying to themselves the word *Presbyter* is a sufficient Argument to prove that

that *All Presbyters* have *Apostolical Power*, and consequently the *Power of Ordination*; then it must also be allowed, that St. Paul's applying to himself (and that more than once, see *Ephes. 3. 7. Col. 1. 23. &c.* nay, even to Christ *Rom. 15. 8.*) the word *Deacon*, is as sufficient an Argument, that *All Deacons* are also invested with *Apostolical Power*, and so with the *Power of Ordination*. And thus you see, that your Own way of Inferring will force you much further, than you can afford to go Willingly or according to your own Principles; which is indeed no other than usually happens to the Abettors or Maintainers of Bad and Erroneous Causes. What then is to be said hereupon but this, that if you your selves do *maintain* or *allow*, that though the word *Deacon* be sometimes applied to the *Apostles* or *Christ*, yet it do's not hence follow, that (*All Deacons* or) *Deacons* properly so called have *Apostolical Power*, particularly that of *Ordination*: then by parity of Reason you must also *maintain* or at least *allow*, that though the word *Presbyter* be sometimes applied to the *Apostles*, yet it do's not thence follow, that (*All Presbyters* or) *Presbyters* properly so called have *Apostolical Power*, particularly that of *Ordination*. Nay give me leave to add, that whatever sort of Arguments you can produce for *Presbyters* properly so called being *Distinct* from and *Superior* to *Deacons*; the Like or as Good may be produced for the *Bishops* of our Church being *Distinct* from and *Superior* to *Presbyters*: and therefore the One as well as the Other ought to be allowed by you, were you guided Uniformly by any Principles.

5. I come now to the last Text that remains to be here mentioned, *1 Tim. 4. 14.* — *with the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery.* Now the Argument drawn from hence by your Writers, namely that the *Presbytery* have the *Power of Laying on of hands*, or of *Ordination*, may be very well Answered from what has been already said, concerning the word *Presbyter* being *promiscuously* applied to the *Apostles* themselves. For hence it will follow, that by the *Laying*

on of the hands of the Presbytery here mentioned may very well be understood the Laying on of the hands of no other than the Apostles. And that hereby is to be understood the Laying on of the Hands (at least) of the Apostle St. Paul is evident from 2 Tim. 1. 6. where the same Ordination, which is in the fore-cited place attributed to the Presbytery, is expressly attributed to St. Paul himself. Whence it will necessarily follow, that though the Presbytery mentioned 1 Tim. 4. 14. did joyn with St. Paul in the Ordination of Timothy, yet they did only joyn with him, and that therefore from thence it can never be proved, that the Power of Ordination did lie in or belong to the Presbytery it self there mentioned.

And though what is already said be sufficient to shew, that the Inference drawn by your Party from the fore-cited 1 Tim. 4. 14. cannot prove what it is brought to prove: yet to convince you more fully of the Badness of your Cause, I shall here subjoyn two Considerations, which tend clearly to evince, that the Power of Ordination did not belong to Presbyters properly so called in the New Testament.

The 1st Consideration is (that which I above hinted at) in reference to Titus 1. 5. For I desire it may be considered, whether there could be any probable Occasion for Titus's being left in Crete to Ordain (Presbyters or) Elders in Every City, if so to be that Presbyters had then the Power of Ordination. For surely the Presbyters, that were Ordained by Titus in one or two of the Cities he first came at, might have very well Ordained Presbyters in All the other Cities, had they been invested with the Power of Ordination. And therefore, since the Presbyters first Ordained by Titus were not so appointed to Ordain Others in the other Cities, but Titus himself was left to Ordain Presbyters (not in one or two but) in Every City; it may be reasonably infer'd, that the Presbyters so ordained by Titus were not empowered themselves to Ordain others.

The other Consideration is this, that since there are to be found no Rules of Ordination (in Any of the other Epistles,

files, tho' many more in number, but) only in the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, who as *single Persons* Presided over and Governed the Churches of *Ephesus* and *Crete*: hence it may be Rationally inferred, that the Doctrine of the Church of England concerning the *Power of Ordination* belonging (not to a *Community of Presbyters*, but) to *Single Persons* by Us called *Bishops*, is no other than what is Agreeable to the Direction and Practice of the Great Apostle St. *Paul*, and consequently of *Apostolical Constitution*.

Thus I have considered the Several Texts made use of by your Writers to Defend your *Presbyterian Ordination*, and have largely shewn that they All fall *very short* of Defending it.

There remains now only one Particular more to be taken notice of under this Second general Head, and it is that Common Artifice made use of by the Dissenting Teachers, to give the People a Wrong notion of *Our Episcopacy*, and so to prejudice them Against it: whereas the very Argument made use of by them *Against our Episcopacy* do's in truth, and if thoroughly considered, make *Not Against Episcopacy* as maintained by the Church of England, but *Against Presbyterianism, Independency, &c.*

Now the Artifice I mean is your Suggesting to the People, that *Episcopal Government, as maintained by the Church of England, is only an Effect of Human Pride and Ambition, and no other than a piece of Popery*. A suggestion so notoriously False, that either those who make use of it, must be supposed altogether Ignorant themselves of the Ancient Records of the Primitive Church; or else Designedly to take advantage of the Ignorance of those Persons, whom they possess with this False Opinion: which surely is a most Wicked method of supporting a Bad Cause, and is no other than what is most highly and justly blamed in the *Popish Priests*, who frequently make use of the like method, as the *Dissenting Teachers* do in this Case.

Tis then so evident from the Antient History of the Primitive Church, that 'tis Granted by the (a) most Learned Men and Chief Champions of your own Party, that *Bishops* were *Distinct from and Superior to Presbyters*, and were Alone invested with the *Power of Ordination* (to speak at the lowest) before the Conversion of *Constantine the Great*. But now 'tis well known to such as are any thing Conversant in the History of the Primitive Church, that the space between the first Planting of the Christian Church and the Conversion of the Emperor *Constantine* to the Faith, were times, wherein Christianity was not only in very *Mean and Low Circumstances*, but even greatly *Persecuted*; in which Persecutions the *Bishops*, as being Heads of the Church, were sure to be Principally sought for, and to be put to death in the First place by the Persecutors. So that those Early times were so far from yielding *any Temptation* to seek the *Episcopal Office or Dignity*, in order to gratifie *Humane Pride and Ambition*; that on the contrary to be made a *Bishop* was the most Ready way to Expose a man to the greatest *Suffering and Miseries*. And therefore so far were Persons from seeking the *Episcopal Dignity* in those times, that it was the general practice for any Person, that was apprehensive of his being likely to be made choice of for that weighty Office and Spiritual Dignity, to *Withdraw and Conceal himself* with the greatest Secrecy; and when discovered, not to take the *Episcopal Charge* upon him, without a sort of *Religious Violence* put upon him, whereof there are many Instances in Primitive History.

a *Salmasius* allows the Distinction of *Bishops* from, and Superiority to *Presbyters*, to have obtained about either the Beginning or Middle of the Second Century. *Vnde Maffalinius*, pag. 223, 224.

Blondel likewise allows, that this Usage had prevailed about A. D. 140. *Apolog. pro Sentent. Hieron.* p. 3.

Daille confesses, that Ordination was strictly and properly an *Episcopal Right* in the third Century or time of *St. Cyprian*. *Daille de Cultu Lat. Relig.* l. 2. cap. 13. p. 171.

Since

Since then 'tis thus acknowledged by your own Party, that the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters (or in one word, *Prelacy*) had for some time prevailed before the Conversion of *Constantine the Great*: and since 'tis undeniably evident from History, that in those Early times the Episcopal Office (though Superior to that of Presbyters, and the greatest Spiritual Dignity, yet) was very far from being attended with any *Worldly Pomp* or *Grandeur*, and on the contrary was only a *Station of Eminent Danger*: do's it not hence appear as clear as the Sun-beams, that 'tis no other than a Suggestion most scandalously and abominably *False*, to suggest or any ways go about to Perswade Ignorant People, that *Episcopacy* or *Prelacy* as it is maintained by the Church of England, was at first no other than an *Unjust Usurpation, and an Effect of Humane Pride and Ambition*?

Nay I dare undertake to shew that the Proneness of Humane Nature to *Pride* and *Ambition*, which your Party would thus groundlessly make use of *Against Episcopacy*, do's on the contrary afford a very good Argument for proving, that *Episcopal Government*, as maintained by our Church, was Originally of *Apostolical Constitution*. For since All men are naturally prone more or less to *Pride* and *Ambition*, 'tis not rationally to be supposed, that the *Whole Order of Presbyters* should at first so tamely and quietly submit themselves to the Authority of their respective *Bishops* in the several parts of the then Christian World, if they knew that the said Authority was *unduly usurped*; especially since in those Early times the *Prelates* (as I have already intimated) were not armed with any Civil power to compell or frighten their *Presbyters* to such an *undue Submission*. Since therefore there is not the Least Account left in the Ecclesiastical History of those Early times, from which any thing may be ratiotially Inferred, or so much as probably Conjectured, but that the *Whole Order of Presbyters* yielded at the very first the most profound Obedience to their respective *Bishops* or *Prelates*; and since on the consideration of the innate Propensity of man to *Pride* and *Ambition*, 'tis not at all Likely that the *Whole Order of Presbyters* would have yielded so ready and profound an

Obedience to their respective *Bishops*, unless they had been well assured, that their *Bishops* were invested with an *Authority* (not unduly usurped over them, but) Agreeable to the *Apostolical Constitutions*: doth it not hence most rationally follow, that the ready and profound Obedience thus paid by the Primitive *Presbyters* to their respective *Bishops* as their *Superiors*, is a Convincing Argument, that the *Superiority of Bishops over Presbyters was of Apostolical Constitution*?

Further yet, as the Natural Proneness of man to *Pride* and *Ambition* (falsly and craftily endeavoured to be made use of by your Party *Against the Episcopacy of the Church of England*) is really a very cogent and strong Argument *For it*: so it is also a very strong and home Argument even *Against both Presbyterianism and Independency &c.* (Thus Uniform is Truth always to its self, and Oppposite to All Error or Falsity.) For I dare appeal in this Case to you your self, notwithstanding all the strength of Prejudice and Partiality, who are most Likely to be influenced with *Pride* and *Ambition*, Those who readily own themselves to be *Inferior to Bishops*, as do the *Presbyters of the Church of England*: or Those who pretend, that they are (not Inferior but) *Equal to Bishops*, as do the *Presbyterian and Independent Teachers*: or to bring the matter nearer to our (a) Saviour's way of Arguing, Who are most like to be on the Side of Truth, Those that seek the honour of Others, as do Our *Presbyters*; or Those that seek their own Honour, as do your *Teachers*. As therefore the Primitive *Bishops* did not usurp their Superiority over their *Presbyters*, but had it assigned to their Office by *Apostolical Constitution*, and therefore the Primitive *Presbyters* readily yielded them Obedience: so in like manner the Present *Bishops* of our Church do not (as you Love to call it, though weakly enough, and without any reason, as I have shewn in my other Letter, p. 24, 25.) *Lord it over the Inferior Clergy*, but act by an *Apostolical Authority* faithfully and continually transmitted down to

^a John 5.18. *He that speaketh of Himself, seeketh his own Glory: but He that seeketh His Glory that sent him, the same is true &c.*

John 8.50. *I seek not my own Glory.*

them,

To a Dissenting Teacher. 37

them, and therefore it is that All the true Presbyters of the Church of England, do not only pay a *Conscientious Obedience* to their respective *Bishops*, but are and will be Ready to *Defend and stand up for the Superiority of the Episcopal Order* at all times. Whence you see that there is not the Least Ground for charging the *Episcopacy* of the Church of England, as being an Effect of Humane *Pride* and *Ambition*.

But now let us see whether *Presbyterianism* and *Independency* may not be most justly looked upon as Effects of *Humane Pride and Ambition*. For is it not a true Effect of *Pride*, to *Arrogate a Power*, which do's not belong to One? and to *Aspire to an Equality* with Those that are really of a *Superior rank above us*? And is not this the very Case of the *Presbyterian* and *Independent* Teachers, who since the Reformation have proudly Arrogated and Usurped to themselves the Power of Ordination; and out of a Vain *Ambition* go about to Perswade Ignorant People, that they are of Equal Authority and Power with the *Bishops* of our Church? But though the *Presbyterian* Teacher is chargeable with *Pride* and *Ambition* in this respect, yet however he retains *Some degrees of Humility and Modesty*, and acknowledges that a *Single Teacher* is accountable to a *Synod*, and not only so, but may (if it be thought *Expedient* for the Good of the Church) be duely and lawfully subjected to a *Superintendent*. Whereas the *Independent* Teacher casts off *All degrees of Humility and Modesty*, nothing sofooth contenting him, unless he be acknowledged to be *Lord Paramount* over his Congregation, i.e. *Independent* or without any Dependency on Any other, and so without being Responsible to or Controllable by Any other Ecclesiastical Superior, but Christ Himself. Thus do's every *Independent* Teacher in effect affirm and proudly maintain, that he is no Other than *Christ's Immediate Vicar on Earth*, which being the very same Title that is claimed by the *Pope of Rome*, may not every *Independent Teacher* be therefore well looked upon as a *Petty Puritan Pope*?

I think by this time it clearly appears to Any one that will not obstinately shut his Eyes, that *Pride and Ambition*

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are falsely charged on the *Episcopacy* or *Prelacy* of the Church of England, and are most justly to be esteemed the *Parents and Supporters of Presbyterianism*, and more especially of *Independency*.

As for the other Part of the Common Suggestion of your Party above-mentioned, viz. that *Our Episcopacy is a piece or offspring of Popery*; this will quickly appear to be *notoriously and scandalously False* from what has been already said. For it has been aboye observed and proved, that the most Learned of your Own Party are forced by the testimony of Primitive Ecclesiastical History to confess, that *our Episcopacy had prevailed in the Church before the Conversion of Constantine the Great*. But now every one that has but a little insight into Ecclesiastical History knows, that *Popery did not begin in the World till a long long time*, to wit, above two or about three hundred years after the Reign of *Constantine the Great*. And therefore for to say or maintain, that *Our Episcopacy is a Piece or Offspring of Popery*, is no less, or rather more Ridiculous and Absurd, than to say or maintain, that *a Protestant Grandfather was the Offspring of his Popish Grandson*. Now put the case, you should happen to hear Any one telling and maintaining to Another of his Acquaintance, in whom he would beget an Ill Opinion of the Protestant Grandfather, that he was no other than the *Son of his Popish Grandson*, I dare appeal to you your self, whether in this case you would not think, that you had but just occasion given you, and that it was not at all Inconsistent with your *Christian Charity and Moderation*, to Look on Him as if he went about thus *Falsly* to prejudice his Acquaintance *Against the Protestant Grandfather*, or as Guilty either of *Scandalous Ignorance*, as not knowing better himself, or else of *more Scandalous Craft*, as *Designedly taking Advantage of his Acquaintance's Ignorance*, to make him Embrace that for *Truth*, which in reality is no other than the *most Absurd Falsity*. Wherefore I appeal further to you, whether by consequence it do's not most truly follow, that We of the Church of England may very reasonably think, that we have but Just occa-
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sion given, and that 'tis not at all Inconsistent with Christian Charity and Moderation, to Look on such as go about to prejudice Others Against our Communion by *Falsly* persuading them, that *our Episcopacy is no other than a Piece or offspring of Popery*, as Guilty either of *Scandalous Ignorance*, as not knowing More of Church-History themselves; or else of a *more Scandalous Craftiness*, as *Designedly taking Advantage of the Ignorance of others, to trapan or draw them into a False Notion of our Episcopal Government.*

And thus I have sufficiently shewn the *Weakness*, nay *Baseness* of this Suggestion of your Party, that *our Episcopacy is a Piece of Popery*: for as much as this Suggestion is no other than a *notorious Falsity, scandalous Absurdity*, and a true piece of *Popish, Jesuitical Craftiness* in Abusing the Ignorance of Others. And what has been above-said in relation to *our Episcopacy*, holds true likewise in relation to our *Liturgy or Forms of Prayer* and other *Usages or Ceremonies* of our Church, (which with like *Scandalous and Jesuitical Falsity* your Teachers endeavour to persuade *Ignorant People*, are no other than so many pieces of *Popery*) as might be fully proved, was it not Foreign to my present Purpose,

I have now gone through those Particulars which I judged proper to lay before you in relation to the Second General Mark of a *False Teacher*, viz. *Falseness of Mission*. And the Sum of what has been said, may be reduced to these three *Heads*, viz.

1. That the Question Controverted between us and you being truly Stated, it clearly appears from *matter of Fact*, that what is now adays called *Presbyterian Ordination*, is not *Valid*; and also that the Inferences drawn by your Party from the *New Testament* do not *immediately or properly belong to the Point in Debate*.

2. However to give you all Satisfaction Desirable, and to convince you of the Unsupportable Badness of your Cause; it has been above shewn, that the *Several Texts*

usually urged by your Party, do not at all make for or justify your Presbyterian Ordination.

3. It has been largely shewn, that your Common Objection *Against our Episcopacy*, as being the Effect of Pride and Ambition and a piece of Popery, is most notoriously False and most scandalously Absurd, and which may with greater Truth be charged upon Presbyterianism, Independency, &c.

Sir, It now remains to Desire you seriously to Apply what has been laid before you under the two foregoing General Characters of a *False Teacher*, to your Own Case; and Impartially to consider how far you are concerned in *Any of the fore-mentioned Particulars*: whether you do not either actually Teach, or else some way or other Approve of or Encourage such *Heterodox or False Principles and Doctrines*, as are above-mentioned; and whether you have a Due and Rightfull Authority to take upon you (as you do) the Exercise of the *Ministerial Office*; since your *Ordination* (as I understand) is no other than *Such a Presbyterian Ordination*, as has been above shewn to be *Not Valid* or of *Due Authority*.

If I have been misinformed as to your Ordination, and you did Receive it from Any one of our *Bishops*; then indeed your Ordination is in its self Good and Valid; but you will be still no less (if not more) to blame, on account of your Exercising your Ministerial Office after a *Schismatical manner*, and in open *Disobedience* to those *Governours of the Church*, to whom at your so receiving Ordination you solemnly promised *Canonical Obedience*.

If it be true, that you are (what you have been represented to be by some, who should know your Principles, namely) *not a Stanch Presbyterian*, but a Composition of a *very various mixture*, in which the chief Ingredient is *Independency*; this is so far from mending your Case, that it renders it still *much Worse*: for as much as *Independency* carries along with it many Principles *much more Extravagant and Distant from the Truth* than *Presbyterianism*, as has been above intimated.

Be

To a Dissenting Teacher. 41

Be your Principles of which sort you will, I hope that what is here laid before you, will prove Effectual to Convince you, in *how bad a Cause* you are engaged; and how nearly it concerns you to Renounce and *Quis your Present Practises*: that it is most highly Adviseable and Necessary for you to look on your self as no other than a *Lay-man*, and to let your *Meeting-house* return to it's Primitive use, or in the Capacity of a *Barn* to be stored with *Better Sorts of Seeds* than the *Seeds of Division and Schism*, which (however blended and mixed with Some Good Seeds of Sound Doctrine among them, yet) in the main tend *Not to Nourish and Strengthen*, but to *Distemper, Weaken and Destroy* the Soul, and that *Eternally*.

Pray give me Leave to Desire and Beseech you, that you would not suffer your self to be Deceived into a Vain Perswasion, that *God is pleased with your Practices*, because you have many *Followers*. For Christ himself has expressly foretold, that the *False Teachers*, which *should arise*, *should deceive many*, *Mat. 24. 11.* So that the *Number of your Proselytes* is but a very Unwarrantable Ground, whereby to judge of the *Righteousness of your Cause*. And to the same purpose 'tis very Remarkable, what St. Paul says of *False Teachers*, who by *transforming themselves into Angels of Light* delude others to become their *Followers*, namely, that *not the Smallness of their Success* in deluding and deceiving others, but their *End* (or Sentence at the Day of Judgement) *shall be according to their Works*, *2 Cor. 11. 15.*

Let me therefore beseech and prevail upon you, frequently to carry your Thoughts from your *Seeming present Good Success*, to what will be the *Fatal and Miserable End* thereof, without a sincere and timely Repentance. Again and again Consider, how deplorable and dreadfull a thing it is, to be the most Unhappy and Miserable *Instrument of Seducing and Fatally Misleading* so many poor Ignorant Souls; and what a Grievous and Stupendous Aggravation it will be to your Account at the Day of Retribution, to have *Deceived Many*.

Lastly, Consider that since St. Peter (*2 Pet. 3. 16.*) has assured us, that *such as Wrest the Scriptures*, though they

42 *A Letter from a Minister &c.*

be *Unlearned*, yet *wrest them to their own Destruction*: it therefore may be very rationally inferred, that the *Learned* or Such as set up for Teachers of others, do by *Wresting the Scriptures*, much more *Aggravate their Own Guilt*, and shall thereby much more *Increase their Own Punishment*, without a timely and sincere Repentance.

Sir, I have now discharged the *Third Branch* above-mentioned of my Ministerial Duty to the Best of my Power, in endeavouring to set before you (with All Clearness of Argument and the Tenderness of a Christian Charity and Moderation) such Particulars as in themselves tend to Convince you of your *very Ill and Sinfull Practices*; and in endeavouring thereby to Draw you off from *Seducing and Misleading* any longer your Followers, particularly Those of my *Own Parish*. The Success of these my Endeavours I most humbly leave to God, who Alone can order the Unruly Wills and Affections of Men; and who, as he knows the inmost Secrets of the Heart, so knows that the *Contents of this Letter* proceed from a *Sincere Charity* to You and your Followers, especially to *Those*, for whom I have a more *Immediate Concern*. And out of this Principle of *Charity*, I shall never cease to pray for *Yours and Their Repentance and Amendment*, according to the Purport of that Short, but Full and Expressive Petition in our Excellent Litany,

*That it may please thee to bring into the way of Truth
All such as have Erred and are Deceived,*

We beseech thee to hear us Good Lord.

So prays without ceasing

Your Faithfull Servant in Christ,

Catesbach, Jan. 13th.

1708.

E D W. W E L L S.

POSTSCRIPT.

Judge it Requisite (for a Reason known, if not to You, Sir, yet to some of your Followers) to take here Particular Notice of that *very wrong Notion* among your Party, *viz.* that *your Separation from our Church is No Schism or Sinfull Separation, so long as it is Not accompanied with Uncharitableness*. To set you Right as to this Point, pray let me Prevail with you to Read again, and Consider Seriously and Impartially, what I have offered on this Head in page 36. of my former Letter; and whether what is there said, be not sufficient to shew, that *your Charity to us* (tho' it should be Real and Lasting, yet) will by no means *Warrant or Excuse your Separation from Us*; nay, whether what is there said, be not sufficient to make you shrewdly suspect, that you may after All be possibly *Deceived as to your (so much talked of) Charitableness towards Us*; and that it is no other than Likely, that, if a fit Opportunity should present it self, *your Zeal to your own Party would soon get the Better*; and quite *Swallow up your Charity to the Episcopal Party*.

For your Further, if not Full Conviction of the great likelihood hereof, I cannot think of a better Method, than to lay here before you the *Received Notions of your own Teachers concerning Toleration*, from about the year 1640. to about 1660. or during the Late Great Rebellion, and also to compare them with the *Notions concerning Toleration given out by your Teachers of later years, or from about 1660. to these Present Times*.

*The Dissenters Notions
of Toleration
from about 1640. to about
1660. or during the Late
Great Rebellion.*

The Lancashire-Teachers in their Harmonious Consent with the London-Teachers (printed 1648.) pag. 12. Speak thus; viz.

A Toleration is

1. *A Putting a Sword into a Mad man's hand.*
2. *An appointing a City of Refuge in Men's Consciences for the Devil to Fly to.*
3. *A Proclaiming Liberty to the Wolves to come into Christ's Fold to Prey upon his Lambs.*
4. *A Toleration of Soul-Murder, the Greatest Murder of All Other, and for the Establishing whereof Dammed Souls in Hell would Accuse Men on Earth.*
5. *It is Not to Provide for Tender Consciences, but to take away All Conscience.*

Mr. Calamy in his Sermon called, The Great Danger of Covenant-Refusing (preached before the pretended House of Commons in 1646.) pag 3. complains thus; viz.

*The Dissenters Notions
of Toleration
from about 1660. or from
the Restoration of Church
and Monarchy to these Pre-
sent times.*

The Dissenting Teachers or other Writers since the Restoration in their Books Speak to this, or the like effect; viz.

A Toleration is

1. *A Pulling a Sword out of a Mad man's hand.*
2. *An appointing a Sanctuary in Men's Consciences for Christ to Betake himself to.*
3. *A Proclaiming Liberty to the True Shepherds to come into Christ's Fold to Feed his Lambs.*
4. *A Toleration of Soul-Savingness, the Greatest Savingness of All Other, and for the Establishing whereof Blessed Souls in Heaven would Rejoyce over Men on Earth.*
5. *It is Not to Take away All Conscience, but to Provide for Tender Consciences.*

The General Voice or Cry of Dissenters at Present runs in this or the like strain; viz.

The Famous City of London
is become an Amsterdam : Se-
paration from our Churches is
Countenanced : Toleration
is Cried up.

'Tis good for London to be
another Amsterdam, England
another Holland : Separation
from the Church is Not to be
Discountenanced : Tolerati-
on ought to be cried up.

The foregoing Comparison being carefully perused, I shall leave it to the Reader to Judge, whether it be not pretty apparent, that the Dissenters have Occasional Principles (viz. Some for Times when they *Are*, Others for Times when they *Are Not in Chief Authority*) as well as Practices ; and particularly that their so much Cried up *Charity* is (like to their *Conformity*, and) at the upshot but only *Occasional*.

The Serious Consideration of these Particulars puts me in mind of an Excellent Collect (or Short but Comprehensive Prayer) of our Church, as a very Proper Conclusion hereunto ; viz.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the Course of this World may be so Peaceably ordered by thy Governance, that Thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all Godly Quietness, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

F I N I S.



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